

TRIBUTE TO DR. VERMELLE J. JOHNSON

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Vermelle J. Johnson of South Carolina, who was recently appointed to the Commission on Higher Education. Dr. Johnson's long and illustrious career spans thirty eight years and includes many incredible accomplishments. I am sure her vast experience will serve her well at the Commission on Higher Education.

Dr. Vennelle J. Johnson is leaving her post as Senior Vice President and Vice President of Academic Affairs at Claflin University in Orangeburg, South Carolina to accept her new appointment. Her stellar career was recognized at an evening of reflection and celebration on July 31, 2001 on the campus of Claflin College.

Dr. Johnson began her career as an educator in the public school system in 1963. In 1969, she became an associate professor of business at South Carolina State University. Dr. Johnson moved to Claflin University in 1979, where she established and implemented a Department of Business Administration.

She went back to the South Carolina State University as Professor and Dean of the School of Education in 1982, and in 1985 she became the Executive Vice President and Provost of the University, which at the time was the highest rank held by a female in the South Carolina public college/university system. In this position, Dr. Johnson established several significant new programs, such as a Master of Arts in Teaching and a Department of Nursing.

In 1995 Dr. Johnson returned to Claflin to serve as Senior Vice President and Vice President for Academic Affairs. During this six-year tenure, Dr. Johnson conducted a complete overhaul of the academic curriculum, brought onboard five new academic Honor Societies and Fraternities, and increased faculty professional development and scholarly activity by more than 100%.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me today in honoring Dr. Vermelle J. Johnson for the incredible service she has provided to the students and citizens of South Carolina. I sincerely thank Dr. Johnson for her outstanding contributions and congratulate her on her recent appointment and wish her the best in all of her future endeavors.

THE 'WILLIE VELASQUEZ'
COMMEMORATIVE STAMP ACT

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, throughout the 2000 Presidential election, talk from both sides of the aisle focused on the growing prominence of Latino voters in the American political system. Of the total number of registered voters in the United States, Latinos currently comprise almost 6 percent. And according to the United States Census Bureau, 12.5 percent of the total U.S. population or 35.3 million Americans are Hispanic.

Legislation I introduced today would recognize William C. "Willie" Velasquez for his pioneering work to empower Latinos and other minority groups through voter registration. Coining the famous phrase, "Su voto es su voz," "Your vote is your voice," Willie not only translated words describing the influence of the vote, he raised a battle cry for political activism that can still be heard today.

Throughout the American Southwest, Willie was recognized as a selfless advocate of the politically under represented. An outstanding leader who inspired others to play an active role in American democracy, Willie dedicated his life to empowering the Hispanic community through voter registration, hard work, and education. His efforts are largely responsible for the unprecedented growth in the number of registered Hispanic, Native American and low-income voters across the country.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Willie helped to lay the foundation of political activism which brought the importance of the Hispanic vote to prominence in the 2000 Presidential election. In large part due to the civil rights organizations Willie founded, voter registration grew from 2.4 million registered Latinos in 1974 to nearly 8 million in 2000.

In 1974, he founded the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project and the Southwest Voter Research Institute (now known as the William C. Velasquez Institute). Under Willie's leadership, Southwest Voter registered Hispanics, Native Americans and low-income citizens across the country in unprecedented numbers. The research institute enjoyed similar success, emerging as a preeminent institution in the analysis of Hispanic voting trends and demographics.

Sadly, Willie passed away in June 1988 without the opportunity to see the full benefits of much of his groundbreaking advocacy work. Congress adjourned for the day upon learning of his passing, and people across the country lamented the untimely loss of the prominent community organizer and leader. President Clinton later presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom to his widow Janie Velasquez and their children.

A request I submitted to the U.S. Postal Service's Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee was unfortunately denied, but Willie's legacy remains an example for all those who believe in civil rights, democracy, and equality. I hope you will agree that his memory is worthy of national recognition and join my efforts to encourage the U.S. Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp in Willie's honor.

Now, more than ever before, the Hispanic voice has been heard and courted by both Democrats and Republicans. Today I urge all my colleagues in the House of Representatives to recognize Willie's life-long work and the importance of the Hispanic vote with a commemorative postage stamp.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF H.R. 4, SECURING AMERICA'S
FUTURE ENERGY ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that this rule does not allow the Rahall-Petri-

Kind amendment to be considered by the members of the House. Yesterday we went before the Committee on Rules to ask that our amendment striking Title II of Division F of H.R. 4 be made in order during floor debate.

This title addresses various aspects of oil and gas production from federal lease lands, both onshore and offshore. The title reportedly seeks to provide greater incentives and royalty relief to oil and gas producers to encourage exploration and development in these areas. These incentives raise several serious policy questions. Unfortunately, this amendment was not made in order, and the full House was denied the opportunity to address this important issue.

The incentives contained in this section are far too generous. They are not in the public interest. They will not provide for our energy security. Further, none of these provisions was contained in President Bush's report on Energy Policy. Indeed, this title is an oil and gas producer's dream, but it is a taxpayer's nightmare.

First, this section provides a full royalty holiday for certain offshore leases granted over the next 2 years. Royalty payment suspension will be allowed for drilling operations in water as shallow as 400 meters. Just a few weeks ago, Interior Secretary Norton testified before the Resources Committee that the Administration does not support granting relief for production in water under 800 meters in depth. And, importantly, the Secretary currently has the authority to waive royalties. We don't need to mandate it—especially at a time of high prices. The CBO cost estimates for this relief are only the tip of the iceberg—taxpayers will continue to lose hundreds of millions, if not billions, of dollars of revenue during the full lifetimes of these leases.

Second, this title proposes to allow the Secretary of the Interior to replace the current royalty system with a "Royalty-in-Kind" program which allows royalties for oil and gas taken from public lands to be paid in actual deliveries of crude oil or natural gas. This would require enlarging the size of the federal presence in these western states so that federal employees can assume private sector responsibilities. This cannot be done efficiently; an audit of a recent royalty-in-kind pilot program in Wyoming found that it had lost \$3 million.

Third, this legislation would mandate a royalty holiday for, and expand the definition of, marginally producing oil and gas wells. Onshore wells producing less than 30 barrels of oil per day would be considered marginal. It is my understanding that approximately 85 percent of all the oil wells on public lands produce less than 30 barrels of oil per day. Clearly, this stretches anyone's definition of marginal. Moreover, relief for truly marginal wells is already provided in this bill through the expansion of the marginal well tax credit.

Fourth, the legislation contains several provisions which transfer the costs of regulatory compliance to taxpayers. Such fees are normally paid by permit applicants. There is no good reason to grant this type of financial relief, and I can think of no other federal program in which taxpayers bear these costs.

I agree that we need to address our energy future to assure all Americans access to reliable and affordable energy. But I fail to see how granting a royalty holiday for oil and gas production on federal leases will accomplish